

F 73
.37
.S36
Copy 1

A HISTORY
OF THE
GARDINER GREENE ESTATE

ON
Cotton Hill, now Pemberton Square, Boston

EDITED BY
WINTHROP S. SCUDDER



Painted by Pratt in 1834

THE GARDINER GREENE MANSION HOUSE
Cotton Hill, now Pemberton Square

A HISTORY
OF THE
GARDINER GREENE ESTATE

ON
Cotton Hill, now Pemberton Square, Boston

EDITED BY
WINTHROP S. SCUDDER



REPRINTED FROM
THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE BOSTONIAN SOCIETY
1916

ILLUSTRATIONS

THE GARDINER GREENE MANSION HOUSE . *Frontispiece*

Painted by Pratt in 1834. Taken from a spot near the west side of Scollay's buildings, showing the mansion house, stable and stable yard, and the north end of the Waldo house.

GARDINER GREENE 8

From a portrait in the possession of Gardiner Greene, Esq., of Norwich, Conn.

MRS. GARDINER GREENE (ELIZABETH COPLEY) . 8

From a photograph.

PLAN OF THE GREENE AND ADJOINING ESTATES . 14

Made in 1835 by Alexander Wadsworth.

PLAN IN DETAIL OF THE GREENE ESTATE . . . 18

As it was in 1834.

The boundaries are taken from the 1835 plan. The details are derived almost altogether from the recollection of Mrs. James S. Amory, with some assistance from the pictures of the house and garden.

THE GARDEN 26

Painted about 1834, probably by Fisher. Taken from the rear of the mansion house, and showing the terraces, shrubbery, etc., with the Mount in the background. The top of the Francis summer-house is seen in both pictures.

FOREWORD

THROUGH the courtesy of Frederic Amory, Esq., grandson of Gardiner Greene, and a Life Member of this Society, two hitherto unpublished manuscripts are presented to you to-day. One which gives a history of the house, compiled from historic documents and records, was written in 1886, by the late Judge Francis Cabot Lowell for Mrs. James Sullivan Amory. The other, written the same year, also for Mrs. Amory, gives an intimate picture of the life in the old mansion and an account of its distinguished mistress, by her friend, Mrs. Robert C. Waterston (Anna Cabot Lowell Quincy).

Just a word about my connection with these papers: Among the pictures which I collected a few months ago, to illustrate "Dr. Holmes's Boston," is included the interesting painting by Pratt in 1834, of the Gardiner Greene house. A reproduction of this, with a view of the garden, plans of the estate on Cotton, or Pemberton Hill, and portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner Greene, which were with the manuscript, are to be published with these papers. Finding it difficult to establish from

records in the libraries the exact date when the house was built, I applied to Mr. Amory, who said that the date would be given in an original manuscript in his possession. This manuscript is the one on the house by Judge Lowell, and preserved with it is the one by Mrs. Waterston.

Your Secretary, when informed of the existence of these manuscripts, suggested that with Mr. Amory's approval, which was readily given, they be read before the Society and included in the forthcoming volume of the Society's publications.

Before I read these two papers, it will, I think, interest you to know a few facts about Mr. and Mrs. Greene, because I believe that people are more interesting than things, and because it is the personality of its occupants that makes a house interesting historically.

Gardiner Greene was born in Boston in 1753, and died there in 1832, in his eightieth year. The foundation of his large fortune was laid in Demerara.

While in England, where he had gone to sell his Demerara plantation, he met Miss Elizabeth Clarke Copley, and in July, 1800, was married to her in London. She was the daughter of John Singleton Copley and sister of John, afterwards Baron Lyndhurst, three times Lord Chancellor of England. Her mother was Susanna Farnham, daughter of Richard Clarke, the merchant to whom was consigned the tea which was destroyed by the Boston Tea Party.

In 1803 Mr. Greene purchased the house on Cotton Hill, built by William Vassall in 1758, and he lived there till his death in 1832. This house was used by Cooper in his novel, "Lionel Lincoln," as the house of Mrs. Lechmere. The estate comprised about two and one-half acres.

The following tribute to the character of Mr. Greene appeared in one of the Boston papers soon after his death, but the name of the writer has not been discovered :

"I cannot permit," says the writer, "the occasion of the death of Mr. Greene, who was both our friend and our father's friend, to pass without a few observations on points of his character which, while they do honor to his memory, should have a salutary influence over us all.

"The early life of Mr. Greene, as well as his latter days, was characterized by the grand secret of success, the habit of application, and in him it was no less powerful than his integrity, an integrity that was rare. We were led to a knowledge of him by our own commercial intercourse with Demerara (where he laid the foundation of his large fortune), by which we frequently had the funds of the widow and fatherless, etc., to place in his hands in his Demerara character of an honest man, to use a familiar expression. And I know of no instance where any charge was made for the faithful care of the trusts.

"In all the public trusts reposed in him, — and they were very numerous and responsible, — and in his commercial intercourse he was alike punctual and was possessed with a very philosophic temperament of mind. One of many instances of this trait I will relate. He made a large shipment to the north of Europe and sustained a very heavy loss. On the return of the Supercargo to Boston, Mr. Greene took him by the hand in his usual friendly manner, without a mention of the loss, and shortly after, by letters of introduction, etc., was instrumental in placing him in a very eligible situation in Europe.

"His manners were of the old school and the open hospitality of his house will be cherished and remembered by many distinguished foreigners and a very extensive circle of friends and acquaintances in this vicinity and throughout the country. The grounds around his mansion on 'Cotton Hill' (afterwards Pemberton Square), commanding one of our finest views, have long been considered one of the 'lions of the city.'

"With regard to his public benefactions I think they will compare with those of his compeers ; and his private ones were very numerous."

At the time of his death, in 1832, Mr. Greene was President of the United States Bank and also of the Provident Institution for Savings.



GARDINER GREENE



MRS. GARDINER GREENE (Elizabeth Copley)

In the "Transcript" of December 31, 1832, I find the following notice :

"At the annual meeting of the Provident Institution for Savings, held Wednesday, December 19th, a letter was read from the Hon. Samuel Hubbard, communicating the death of the President of this institution. Whereupon it was unanimously voted : That this Corporation entertains a deep sense of the great loss this Institution and the community have sustained by the death of Gardiner Greene, Esq., who for many years gratuitously devoted himself in the office of its Treasurer, with equal zeal, intelligence and fidelity to its service ; and who subsequently in that of its President, by the constant and unwearied application of his talents and vigilance has been greatly instrumental in extending a confidence in it and promoting its best interests and prosperity."

Mrs. Greene lived until 1866. The "Transcript" of February 2, the day after her death, says :

"The venerable Mrs. Greene, who died in this city yesterday, at the advanced age of ninety five years, was the only person living here who sailed from the Province of Massachusetts under the British flag just before the Revolution.

"With her brother, the late Lord Lyndhurst, and her sister, she embarked for England on the last vessel that left our shores under the English ensign. The three children then went to England to visit their father, the

famous painter, J. S. Copley, who had just returned from Italy, and was at that time receiving much patronage from the patrons of art in London. Mrs. Greene lived ninety years after this meeting with her father."

In the "Transcript" of December 29, 1832, the following extract was reprinted from the "Atlas":

"The disposition of his property by the late Gardiner Greene has been the topic of conversation in this city since the will was deposited in the Probate Office. The aggregate amount is as yet a matter of conjecture, but it is believed it will not fall much short of three million dollars." His widow and his son-in-law, Hon. Samuel Hubbard, were appointed Executors and Trustees. After making ample provision for his family, he manumitted his mulatto man and allowed him the use of the house he lived in, free of rent, and \$60 per annum.

In editing these papers it has seemed to me most fitting that attention be drawn and a public record kept of these two important actors in the life of Boston one hundred years ago. Their house was the centre of that society — high-minded, intellectual, philanthropic, and of that hospitality, simple yet formal and elegant, which gave to Boston its unique and distinguished place among American cities; and their numerous descendants still keep alive and carry on the fine old traditions of that day.

WINTHROP S. SCUDDER.



A HISTORY OF THE GARDINER GREENE ESTATE

On Cotton Hill, now Pemberton Square, Boston

This paper was written in 1886 by Hon. Francis Cabot Lowell, (1855-1911), for Mrs. James Sullivan Amory (Mary Copley Greene), daughter of Gardiner and Elizabeth Copley Greene. It was read at the November, 1915, Meeting of the Bostonian Society by Winthrop S. Scudder, and is now printed by permission of Frederic Amory, Esq.



MORE than a quarter of the Town of Boston, as it existed a hundred years ago, was covered by Beacon Hill. This was so much larger than either Copps Hill or Fort Hill, that in some views of Boston they disappear altogether, while Beacon Hill seems to fill up the peninsula.¹ It was divided into three principal crests,² the highest in the centre,

¹ See Memorial History of Boston, vol. 3, p. 156; vol. 4, p. 66; Antique Views of Boston, pp. 162, 166; Beacon Hill in 1635 and 1790, p. 9. See also a View of Boston in 1743 (Boston Athenaeum).

² Mem. Hist., vol 1, p. 525.

on which the beacon stood, with Mount Vernon to the west and Cotton Hill to the east.

What was then the central crest, or Beacon Hill proper, is now crossed by Temple Street,¹ opposite the reservoir lot.² It was a steep, conical hill, rounded at the top, and rather higher than the roof of the present State House.³ From this point the land fell away abruptly toward Bowdoin and Bulfinch streets, so that a piece of land between Bulfinch and Somerset streets, extending a little farther to the eastward was called Valley Acre.⁴ From Valley Acre eastward rose Cotton Hill. Upon it there appear to have been three small crests,⁵ one where the summer house of Mr. Ebenezer Francis stood,⁶ another on the Greene estate,⁷ with a

¹ Beacon Hill in 1635 and 1790, p. 23.

² Now (1915) occupied by the State House Extension.

³ See the colored lithographs of Beacon Hill made soon after the present State House was built. Copies can be found in the Old State House, and there are reduced copies of several (uncolored) Mem. Hist., vol. 4, pp. 64 *et seq.*

⁴ Fifth Report of Boston Record Commissioners, second edition, pp. 79, 82, (cited hereafter as Rec. Com.). This book consists of a series of articles by Mr. N. I. Bowditch, originally published in the Boston Daily Transcript of 1855. Valley Acre is also spelt Valley Achor, and it is doubtful which is the original form.

⁵ Snow's Hist. of Boston, p. 112. See a map of Boston made in 1728 (Boston Public Library). It is pretty clear that the name "Tremont" did not come from Beacon, Fort and Copp's Hills. Whether, as Mr. Snow suggests, it came from the three crests of Cotton Hill, or from the three crests of Beacon Hill, is doubtful.

⁶ Rec. Com., p. 77 and see the picture by Salmon, owned by Mr. W. H. Whitmore (Mem Hist., vol. 4, frontispiece). See also Note on Pictures, *infra*.

⁷ See the picture of Mr. Greene's garden, facing p. 60.

small valley between the two, and probably a third on the adjoining Phillips estate. Cotton Hill was, therefore, a short ridge nearly parallel to Somerset street, with an abrupt descent toward Tremont street and Tremont Row,¹ and a somewhat gentler descent toward Bowdoin Square. Approaching from the east, we should find Tremont Row (then called Tremont street) considerably higher than it now is,² and rising from Howard street (formerly Southack's Court) towards what is now the east entrance of Pemberton Square. Dr. Shurtleff's estate was lower than Mr. Lloyd's,³ which in turn, was lower than Mr. Greene's.

Mr. Greene's mansion house stood on land about fifteen feet higher than the street, but it was at the bottom of the steep descent of the hill, which rose abruptly behind it in four or five terraces. The crest of the hill on the Greene estate was about sixty-five feet above the present elevation,⁴ while the centre of the enclosure in Pemberton Square has been cut down about fifty-five feet.⁵ The Francis summer house is said to have been seventy feet above the present level of the land on which it stood.⁶ From the crest of the hill, the Greene estate descended towards Somerset

¹ See the Faneuil Map (Boston Public Library).

² Information furnished by Mr. Alexander Wadsworth.

³ From papers and plans belonging to the Jackson family.

⁴ Life of Asa G. Sheldon, p. 181 (Woburn Public Library).

⁵ Life of Sheldon, p. 183.

⁶ Rec. Com., p. 77.

street, where a cutting, some twenty feet deep, had been made when the street was laid out in 1801.¹ At the beginning of this century, the steep sides of the hill were nearly bare of trees,² although several large English elms upon the very top of the hill served as landmarks to vessels entering the harbor.³ At the bottom of the hill, near the house, there were doubtless many trees.⁴

In the "Book of Possessions," compiled soon after the settlement of Boston, the larger part of the Greene estate is set down as belonging to the Reverend John Cotton, second pastor of the First Church.⁵ The so-called Waldo estate then belonged to Daniel Maud, while the land behind Mr. Greene's garden, the southernmost part of his estate, belonged to Richard Bellingham. Mr. Cotton's lot extended across what is now Somerset street to the east line of the Mt. Vernon Church⁶ in Ashburton Place. His house stood very near the site

1 Suffolk Deeds, lib. 210, fol. 140. Annexed to the record is a plan of a section made at right angles to Somerset street. This shows that the street was to be cut down twenty-six feet, and that the descent was to be graded.

2 See the water-color view taken from Fort Hill in 1807 (Old State House). An engraving of this (reduced) is in Mem. Hist., vol. 4, p. 47. See also the view of Boston from the house of Col. Hatch in Dorchester (State Library).

3 Mem. Hist., vol. 3, p. 228.

4 Picture of Mr. Greene's house, Sewall's diary, vol. 2, p. 129.

5 Rec. Com., p. 84 *et seq.* and see plan I. The map in the Boston Athenaeum and elsewhere made up from the Book of Possessions is needlessly inaccurate. See Note on Plans, *infra*.

6 Now (1915) the Boston University School of Law.

of the Vassall-Greene house, and in 1636 it was doubled in size by Sir Harry Vane, who lived with him for two years.¹ Mr. Cotton died in 1653, and his estate, after being divided and passing through several hands, was united in 1682 in the possession of John Hull, mint-master and coiner of the "Pine Tree Shillings."² Hull died a year later, and the premises passed to his daughter Hannah, first wife of Samuel Sewall, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Province. In 1697 Sewall bought about half an acre of the Bellingham lot, and the estate took the boundaries which it had in Mr. Greene's day, except that it extended further to the westward, across what is now Somerset street, and except for the Maud-Waldo lot, bought in 1824, which Mr. Greene never treated as a part of his homestead.

Judge Sewall lived on the Cotton estate for nearly fifty years. In 1684 he asked the General Court for leave to build a small wooden porch about seven feet square, in order to break the wind from the "fore-door" of his house, which stood exposed and at a distance from other houses.³ His petition was granted. Four years later, he was approached by the Reverend Mr. Ratcliff (afterwards Rector of Kings Chapel) and Captain Davis, and was asked to sell them a piece of land for a church lot. He refused sternly, both because

¹ Rec. Com., p. 84.

² Rec. Com., p. 85; Mem. Hist., vol. 1, p. 354.

³ Massachusetts Colonial Records, p. 456.

the land had once belonged to John Cotton, and also because he "would not set up what the people of New England came over to avoid." "In after discourse," he continues, "I mentioned chiefly the cross in baptism, and holy days."¹

In 1693 Judge Sewall tore down the old Vane-Cotton house and built another in its place, fetching its corner-stones from Boston Common.² He was proud of his new residence and tells how Mr. Quincy was much pleased with some painted shutters in it, and "in pleasauncy said he thought he had been got into paradise."³ The Judge walked often on the top of Cotton Hill, and when, in 1699, Lord Bellomont came out to the Province as Governor, Judge Sewall invited his lady to look at the town from this spot, which was then, no doubt, the best point of view. As they came down through Sewall's garden gate at the back of his house, the old puritan gallantly begged her to let him call it Bellomont gate for the future. The lady graciously assented.⁴

Besides building a new house, Sewall improved the estate in several ways. There were other houses standing upon it, which he let to Mr. Hirst, Obadiah Gore and others,⁵ and he took great pains that Mr. Leblond, or Lebloom, who then owned what was later

¹ Sewall's Diary, vol. 1, p. 207.

² *Ibid.*, vol 1, p. 377.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 413.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 500.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 22; *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 157. See Bonner's Map, A. D. 1722; Mem. Hist., vol. 2, p. xiii; Plan I.

called the Waldo house, should not wrongfully open a window upon his (Sewall's) premises.¹ He also planted trees — poplars, probably Lombardy poplars, and a white oak.²

On Sewall's death, in 1729, the estate, or at any rate the mansion house, seems to have been occupied by his daughter Judith, wife of the Reverend William Cooper, pastor of the Brattle Street Church. In 1733, while digging in Mr. Cooper's garden, the workmen threw up a considerable number of human bones, and this recalls the fact that one of the Mathers mentions that the hill was sometimes called Golgotha,³ probably from a similar circumstance which happened earlier. Curiously enough, when the hill was dug down in 1835, it was found that the cellar of one of the houses upon it had been used as a family burial vault.⁴ About 1758, Sewall's heirs divided the property, and sold it to William Vassall, a relative of that Vassall who built the Craigie-Longfellow house in Cambridge. At this time there were three dwelling houses on the land, one where the Vassall-Greene house stood, one on the site of the stable, and a third behind this last. Directly south of the mansion house, behind the Waldo house was a garden.⁵

¹ Sewall's Diary, vol. 2, p. 236.

² Sewall's Diary, vol. 2, p. 129; *Ibid.*, vol. 3, p. 217.

³ Shaw's Description of Boston, p. 78.

⁴ Life of Sheldon.

⁵ Suffolk Deeds, Lib. 92, fol. 29 *et seq.*, and see Plan I.

Soon after his purchase, it seems that Mr. Vassall tore down all the houses on the estate, and built of wood the house which is shown in the picture. Here he lived, no doubt in much greater state than Sewall or Cooper. He was a royalist and, in 1775, he entertained in his house Earl Percy, when the latter was in Boston at the time of the battle of Lexington.¹ He was a refugee² and, after the peace, in 1790, his estate was sold to Patrick Jeffrey, uncle of Francis Jeffrey, and brother-in-law of John Wilkes.³ Like Mr. Vassall, Mr. Jeffrey lived in great state.⁴

In 1801 he sold a strip of land to the City of Boston for Somerset street, and thus separated the smaller western portion of his estate from the larger eastern part.⁵ On November 20, 1802, he sold this last to Jonathan Mason for thirty-six thousand dollars.⁶ On April 2, 1803, Mr. Mason conveyed it to Mr. Gardiner Greene with the mansion house and brick stable thereon, the consideration being forty-one thousand dollars.⁷ Of this estate in Mr. Greene's day, Mr. Bowditch says, "The house had no remarkable architectural pretensions of any kind, but the natural beauties of the site,

¹ Drake's Landmarks of Boston, p. 53.

² Rec. Com., p. 87.

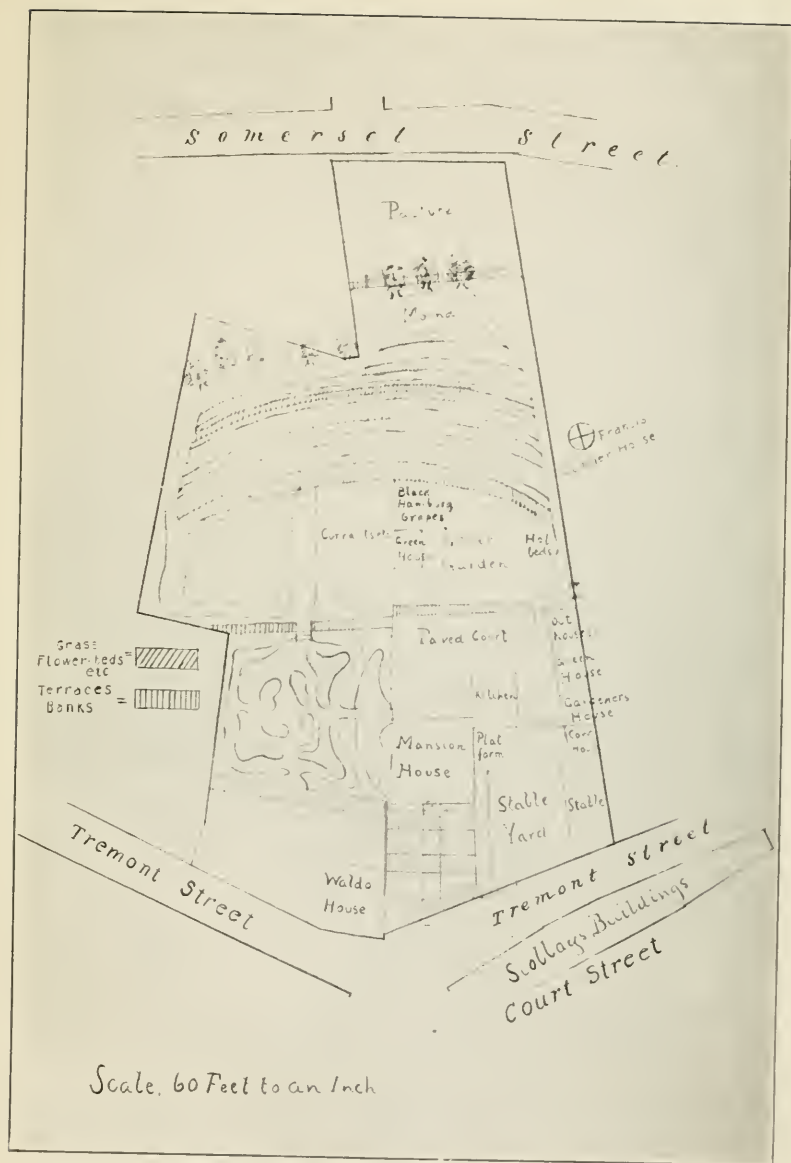
³ *Ibid.*, p. 85. Probably Mr. Jeffrey bought the estate with his wife's money. For an account of the relations between the two, see Rec. Com., p. 89.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁶ Suffolk Deeds, Lib. 203, fol. 32.

⁷ *Ibid.* Lib. 205, fol. 252.



PLAN IN DETAIL OF THE GARDINER GREENE ESTATE

improved by taste and art, made it altogether the most splendid private residence in the city." ¹ Mr. Marshall P. Wilder says, "The most conspicuous and elegant garden of those days was that of Gardiner Greene, who had one of the early green-houses of Boston. The grounds were terraced and planted with vines, fruits, ornamental trees, flowering shrubs and plants, and were to me when I visited them sixty-five years ago a scene of beauty and enchantment I shall never forget. Here were growing in the open air Black Hamburg and White Chasselas grapes, apricots, nectarines, peaches, pears and plums in perfection, presenting a scene which made a deep impression on my mind. Here were many ornamental trees brought from foreign lands." ² These gardens, either in whole or in great part were laid out by Mr. Greene. In 1824 he bought the small Maud-Waldo lot with the brick house standing on it, but he never treated it as part of the homestead. ³

Mr. Greene died in 1832, and the estate, containing 103,945 feet, was appraised at \$142,000. ⁴ In 1835 it was sold to Mr. Patrick T. Jackson, acting for himself and others, the price paid being \$160,000. ⁵ At about the same time, Mr. Jackson bought the Lloyd estate to the north, the Phillips estate to the south, and several estates on Somerset street to the west. He employed

¹ Rec. Com., p. 88.

² Mem. Hist., vol. 4, p. 610.

³ Suffolk Deeds, Lib. 293, fol. 196.

⁴ Rec. Com., p. 89.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

Mr. Asa G. Sheldon to cut down the hill and carry away the soil to the western part of the old Mill Pond, near Causeway street and the Lowell Railroad Station. Between seven and eight o'clock on the morning of May 5, 1835, the work was begun, and it was finished in exactly five months.¹ Mr. Sheldon employed sixty-three yoke of oxen, with Yankees for drivers, and one hundred and ninety Irishmen for shovellers.² The various houses on the hill were sold, the Greene mansion house bringing two thousand dollars. In the Lloyd house the Yankees were lodged,³ while three temporary barns were built for the oxen, and a temporary smithy for shoeing them. The English elms on the top of the hill were sold for timber to the Charlestown Navy Yard⁴ and the immense shrubbery was destroyed.⁵ Mr. Sheldon was offered three hundred dollars to move the gingko tree and warrant its life for a year. He examined it carefully and did not dare undertake the job; he estimated that the tree contained about two feet of cord-wood.⁶ Later it was successfully moved to the Boston Common, opposite Joy street, where it now stands.⁷

¹ Life of Sheldon, p. 194. ² *Ibid.*, p. 189. ³ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 181. ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 181. ⁶ Life of Sheldon, p. 181.

⁷ After Mr. Sheldon refused to take the risk of moving the tree, Dr. Jacob Bigelow, on account of his friendship for Mrs. Greene, had the tree transplanted May 7, 1835, to the head of the "long path" on the Common, opposite 32 Beacon street, where Mrs. Greene moved from Cotton Hill, and where she lived over thirty years, to the end of her life. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes in his "Autocrat" refers to the gingko tree.

Mr. Sheldon removed from Cotton Hill something over 100,000 yards of gravel for which he was paid about twenty-eight cents a yard. The day after his work was done, the property, which had already been divided into suitable lots, was sold by auction. It is understood that Mr. Jackson's speculation was not successful.

FRANCIS C. LOWELL,

Feb. 13, 1886



A LONG LIFE

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF

ELIZABETH COPLEY GREENE

(Mrs. Gardiner Greene)

This paper was written for Mrs. James Sullivan Amory in 1886 by Mrs. Robert C. Waterston (Anna Cabot Lowell Quincy), daughter of Josiah Quincy, President of Harvard College.

It is asserted by those curious in statistics that many thousand souls daily enter and leave this world by the pathways we call life and death. Of the ninety-one thousand who were born in November, 1770, and of the thousands who left it on the first day of February, 1866, few had lived thro' the track of time embraced between these two dates, ninety-six years,—a period which includes perhaps more vital changes, moral, mental, physical, political and domestic, than any of its predecessors. Yet a life has just closed among us which spanned this remarkable epoch. Elizabeth Clarke Copley, the daughter of the distinguished artist, John Singleton Copley, was born in November, 1770, in Boston, Massachusetts. In June, 1774, her father left America,

for London, and on May 17th Mrs. Copley and her three children followed him, sailing from Marblehead in 1775. This was the last ship bearing the ruling ensign of George III which passed over the waters of Massachusetts Bay then washing the rocks of a colony, which from henceforth were to dash against the shores of a Republic. Three little children played upon that deck. The boy of two years old (Lord Lyndhurst) destined to be a ruler among the people to whom he was going, and two little girls, the eldest of the group (Mrs. Gardiner Greene) having just closed her long life at the age of ninety-five years.

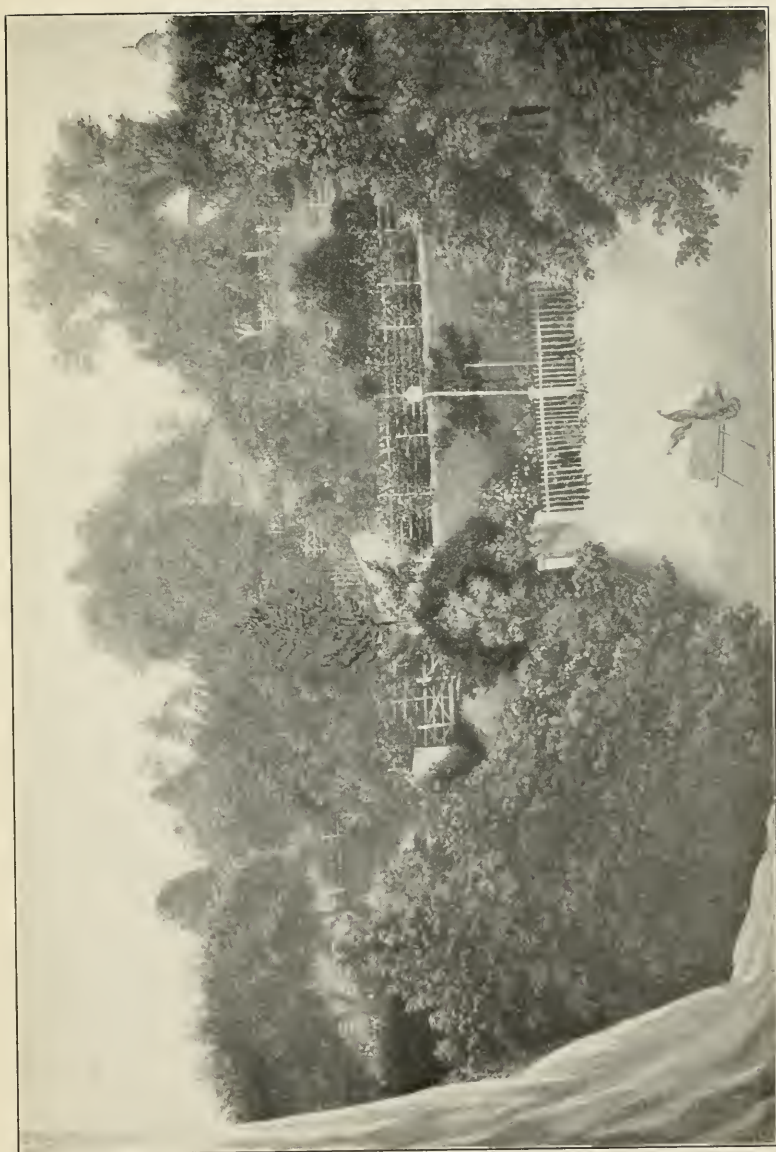
Soon after the artist's family had reached London, Copley's name had become known. In Sir Joshua Reynolds' memoir it is stated that among the pictures exhibited in the newly organized Academy, 1766, a self taught American artist contributes a portrait of "a boy with a flying squirrel." This picture, which first attracted public attention in London, is now in the possession of Mrs. James S. Amory, a grand-daughter of the painter. In 1777, Copley is again mentioned as a member of the Royal Academy and as contributing several pictures to the Exhibition. Thus, safely across the Atlantic, Mrs. Copley and her children were in their London home, the future Lord Chancellor playing perhaps by stealth with his father's paint brushes. Elizabeth Copley grew up in the atmosphere of a London artist's life, and many names which now appear almost

classic, must have been as household words, in her father's home. Edmund Quincy once playfully said to Mrs. Greene that he could not forgive her for not having seen Dr. Johnson, who might, just as well as not, have come rolling into Sir Joshua's painting room, some morning when she was there with her father, a girl of thirteen. But she could not recall such an interview, though she perfectly remembered Sir Joshua and other celebrities.

In July, 1800, in St. George's Church, London, Elizabeth Copley married Gardiner Greene of Boston, Massachusetts, no longer a colony, but one of the United States of America. The transition from London life to the then primitive state of society in New England, must have been a great change to the young lady. In after years she related her sensations on arriving in the morning of an intensely hot midsummer day. It was Sunday, and the good people were all going to church in square topped chaises, driven by negro boys who sat crossed legged in front to drive. A style of equipage which appeared new and odd to her, in her progress through the narrow streets. After church the news spread : a ship from London, and a bride, were arrivals that excited great interest in the quiet town, and all who had any right to claim acquaintance with Mr. Greene, flocked to the house to welcome the bridal party. We who have shared her hospitalities in after years, can readily imagine how gracefully they were

received. But grander duties awaited Mrs. Greene on the threshold of her new home ; three little children, called her as their father's wife, by the responsible name of mother. The first kiss of welcome was a pledge, faithfully kept, of that tenderness and fidelity with which she performed her part towards them. Her own children were not more carefully reared, and the experience of many years only strengthened the ties which bound the adopted ones to their mother. Our first personal recollections of Mrs. Greene are connected with one of the mansions of the past.

As we occasionally pass through the region of Pemberton Square, like poor Susan in Wordsworth's exquisite poem we see, "A mountain ascending, a vision of trees," a hanging garden rises before us and from the summit of its terraces we behold a wide sweep of land and sea. Half way between the garden and the street stands the white mansion, with its broad flights of steps, its paved court-yard, its ample door opening into the hall. The drawing rooms look towards the lower street, but from the cosy window seats in the dining room we see the garden white with snow or gay with flowers. We recall stately dinners, gay evening parties and wedding guests, and every where the lady of the mansion, a presiding presence. This noble mansion and its gardens, seem now like the baseless fabric of a vision. It was the home of Mrs. Greene for a life time as reckoned by common experience, yet after her husband's death,



THE GARDEN
On Cotton or Pemberton Hill

and when even the earth had been removed from where her home once stood, Mrs. Greene survived for more than thirty years. Several times she crossed the Atlantic; on the last occasion, when one of her family expressed some fears, that, at her advanced age, she might not return, she replied, "I wish to see my brother and sister once more. What matters it if I die in England; they will lay me near my parents." One incident in Mrs. Greene's life is too romantic to be omitted. Not long before, on one of her visits to London, Lord Lyndhurst had received a letter from the Executor of an old gentleman who had died in India. Among his effects was a miniature portrait of a young lady, and as the name "Miss Copley," was on a slip of paper pasted upon the back of the picture, the Executor sent it to Lord Lyndhurst, who bought it, previous to Mrs. Greene's arrival. Mrs. Greene instantly recognized it, as a portrait of herself when a girl of seventeen, painted by an amateur artist, a visitor at her father's house. By a singular chain of events the old lady of near eighty held in her hand "the counterfeit presentment" of herself, as a gay young girl, in a jaunty hat and coquettish air, while the yellow slip of paper on the portrait showed how carefully it had been preserved, associated with her name, through long reaches of time, under tropic skies, until it came as a messenger out of the dim past to greet her after the lapse of nearly seventy years.

When this long life, which had been prosperous and happy, to a rare degree, drew to its close, she once more became as a little child, the soul withdrawing itself to some mysterious shelter.

Tenderly cared for by her devoted children, she was shielded from all knowledge of passing events and from griefs which Providence did not intend she should share. And her last days like her first in the old Town of Boston were a child's life, — still and calm, the prelude of a fresh experience.

ANNA C. L. QUINCY WATERSTON,
May 31, 1886.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 076 821 2